

Message Text

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ACTION IO-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 ARA-08 EUR-08 NSC-05 NSCE-00

INR-05 CIAE-00 PM-03 DODE-00 L-01 PRS-01 IOE-00 /049 W

----- 014146

P R 011650Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8624

INFO USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 5820

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, PORG, PFOR, MX

SUBJ: MEXICAN REQUEST FOR SUPPORT ON CERDS AND UN SECRETARY
GENERALSHIP

1. I WAS TOLD BY BELIGIAN AMBASSADOR THAT WHEN LUXEMBURG
AMBASSADOR VISITED ROBASA YESTERDAY MONDAY, RABASA REQUESTED:
(A) THAT LUXEMBURG CHANGE ITS POSITION ON CERDS TO
ONE OF SUPPORT HERE AT WCIWY AS WELL AS IN OTHER FORA.
THE LUXEMBURGER IS REPORTED TO HAVE REPLIED ROUGHLY THAT
AN OFFICIAL LUXEMBURG POSITION COULD NOT BE CHANGED LIGHTLY
AND WITHOUT FULL STUDY.

(B) REQUEST FOR SUPPORT OF ECHEVERRIA'S CANDIDACY AS
UN SECRETARY GENERAL. THE LUXEMBURGER SAID THAT HE WOULD
HAVE TO REFER THIS TO HIS GOVERNMENT.

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN PRESS STORIES ORI-
GINATING IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK AS WELL AS MEXICO RE-
GARDING ECHEVERRIA'S CANDIDACY FOR THE UN SECRETARY
GENERALSHIP, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THIS MATTER HAS BEEN
RAISED OFFICIALLY FO FAR AS WE KNOW. WE CAN ONLY PRESUME,
THEREFORE, THAT ECHEVERRIA'S FORTHCOMING TRIP TO AFRICA
AND THE MIDDLE EAST WILL INCLUDE THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL-
SHIP ASPIRATION HIGH ON ITS AGENDA.

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3. THE REACTIONS TO ECHEVERRIA'S POSSIBLE UN CANDIDACY HAVE BEEN RATHER MIXED LOCALLY. THERE IS OF COURSE INSTINCTIVE ENTHUSIASM AMONG THE MEXICAN PRESS AND VARIOUS POLITICAL CIRCLES FOR SUCH A POSSIBILITY. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAS OBSERVED THAT THE ECHEVERRIA ELECTION WOULD BE PRACTICALLY A CERTAINTY IN VIEW OF THE THIRD WORLD BLOC STRENGTH AND HE COULD NOT ENVISAGE ANY ONE OF THE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ACTUALLY VOTING A LATIN AMERICAN WITH ECHEVERRIA'S THIRD WORLD CREDENTIALS.

4. THE YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR FELT THE SAME WAY. WHILE BOTH THE ABOVE WERE SYMPATHETIC TO WALDHEIM'S DESIRES FOR RE-ELECTION, THEY THOUGHT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT A EUROPEAN COULD WIN OVER A THIRD WORLD CANDIDATE AND PARTICULARLY ONE AS ACTIVE AS ECHEVERRIA.

5. THE ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR OBSERVED PRIVATELY THAT ECHEVERRIA WAS SUCH A MERCURIAL PERSONALITY THAT HE MIGHT BE VERY DIFFICULT ONCE IN OFFICE AND THAT HIS COUNTRY IN ANY CASE DID NOT LIKE TO CONSIDER HIM AS THE "LEADER OF LATIN AMERICA".

6. THE BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR GRIMACED AT THE POSSIBILITY AND TOLD ME THAT HE WAS UNDER STRICT INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIS GOVERNMENT TO MAKE NO PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE MATTER. A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO DON ANTONIO CARRILLO FLORES, FORMER MEXICAN FOREIGN MINISTER, OBSERVED PRIVATELY THAT ECHEVERRIA WAS A REMARKABLE PERSON WITH AN EXCEPTIONAL CAPACITY FOR WORK BUT AT THE SAME TIME WAS IN HIS OPINION TEMPERAMENTALLY UNSUITED FOR THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE UN. MOREOVER, HE SPOKE NOT A WORD OF ANY OTHER LANGUAGE OTHER THAN SPANISH AND THIS WOULD BE A PARTICULAR HANDICAP AS MUCH OF THE UN WORK IS DONE IN ENGLISH. IN HIS OPINION, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO CONSIDER ECHEVERRIA A NEUTRAL AS HE WAS SO IDENTIFIED WITH THE THIRD WORLD BLOC.

7. ON THE OTHER HAND, JAMAICAN PRIME MINISTER MANLEY ON ARRIVAL HERE YESTERDAY TOLD THE PRESS THAT HE CONSIDERED ECHEVERRIA "A MOST ADEQUATE" CANDIDATE FOR THE UN.

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8. WE ARE GETTING AN INCREASING NUMBER OF INQUIRIES FROM MEXICAN JOURNALISTS ON THIS POSSIBILITY AND SO FAR HAVE MANAGED TO TURN THEM ASIDE WITH VAGUE PHRASES OF ADMIRATION FOR ECHEVERRIA'S PERSONALITY BUT I FORESEE THAT THE QUESTIONS WILL GROW SHARPER AND MORE TENACIOUS ALONG WITH QUESTIONS AS TO HIS NOBEL PEACE PRIZE PROSPECTS.

9. NOW THAT THE ECHEVERRIA CAMPAIGN SEEMS TO HAVE COM-

MENCED IN SERIOUSNESS, I DO NOT FORESEE ITS FADING AWAY
QUITELY IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECRETARY GENERAL, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, ELECTION CANDIDATES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MEXICO05820
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750228-0039
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750795/aaaadhmc.tel
Line Count: 118
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <03 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEXICAN REQUEST FOR SUPPORT ON CERDS AND UN SECRETARY GENERALSHIP
TAGS: EGEN, PORO, PFOR, MX, XX, UN, (ECHEVERRIA ALVAREZ, LUIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006